



Washington State  
Association of

County  
Engineers



**WSACE Eastern District Meeting  
May 4-5, 2006  
Coast Wenatchee Hotel - Wenatchee, Washington**

County representatives in attendance;

Adams	Douglas	Kittitas	Spokane
Benton	Franklin	Lincoln	Whitman
Chelan	Garfield	Pend Oreille	
Columbia	Grant	Stevens	

President Jolene Gosselin called meeting to order at 10:00 am.

Leo Bowman, Co- Chair of WSAC Legislative steering committee, discussed with the group a need for the WSACE to have a representative step forward and serve on the Transportation sub committee next year. He urged the group to discuss the matter with their Board of Commissioners in May to see who is interest in serving.

**Reports**

*Kathleen Davis, WSDOT H&LP*

Passed out literature on 4 items: Target zero (SHSP), FHWA – Federal Safety Funds (Rural County 2 lane roadway Pilot Program), Implementation Guidance for Federal Project Selections, SAFETEA-LU Future Decisions

**General discussion about the SAFETEA – LU**

- Bill is 2 years late – 6 year bill to expire in 2009
- Legislature and Governor's Office took an active roll in the decision making process as to how the money was to be spent. The old 'gang of eight' approach is not expected to be revitalized
- Governor's office has requested that a 1/4 meeting schedule be setup for future funding issues and guidance.

**State Flexible Funds**

- Assumed to plan for 96 million dollars
- Could not produce STIP that planned out that far at the RTPO/MPO level
- Actual dollars that came in only left approximately 22 million on the table
- 2 projects were funded and 10 million was left for emergency relief

**Enhancement Funds**

- JTC is studying the distribution of enhancement funds. Consideration for a provision to be added to meet or exceed the national average for the distribution of enhancement dollars amongst the categories funded failed. One new category was added, Conferences and Workshops.

#### Safety Funds

- 40 million dollars to fund an Intersection and Corridor program and a Rural County Two – Lane Roadway Pilot Program.
- 2 Lane Roadway Program - Projects currently under contract with H & LP are to proceed forward, other entities will be required to submit further information before proceeding. (See handout)
- Remaining funds will be going to Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), Target Zero. Development of the plan will start with coordination with the WTP. Question was asked if monies could be given to the Sheriff's office for enforcement. Kathleen said 'no' money is for transportation.

#### Railway Highway Crossing

- 9 million dollars left over to be spent on at-grade crossings. Does anyone have a need?

#### Safe Routes to Schools

- School districts ended up with federal dollars that they had difficulty spending because of CA compliance.
- Derek Pohle, Grant County asked why some money was given for hardware only and did not include provisions for the installation. This is a federal issue that the State has no control over. Talk with your legislator.

#### Border Infrastructure

- Legislature programmed all of the dollars in this category.

#### Surface Transportation Program

- Kathleen explained the handout "Implementation Guidance for Federal Project Selection" and the need for RTPO/ MPO's and County Lead Agency's to setup a competitive process for all eligible entities within their jurisdictions. She also stated that a distribution of the Federal dollars based on populations would not be allowed.
- Discussion about rural counties that do a population distribution of "County" dollars and not Federal dollars through interlocal agreements amongst agencies.
- Jay Weber asked if the Six-year road program process that Counties are required to complete now would be sufficient for the competitive requirement. Kathleen stated that it should compile if it is competitive.
- Kathleen stated that she is traveling around to discuss with RTPO/ MPO's this issue and that a narrative would be needed describing the process used.
- Allocation letters to the agencies should be going out in July.

#### Bridge (BRAC)

- BRAC needs are at 22% - Discussion is needed with the Governor's office to determine the direction of the BRAC funding

#### *Jay Weber, Executive Director, CRAB*

- Jay gave an update on the SHPO 0505 rule and its' application to the Counties in reference to the RAP program. They are hopeful that compliance can be accomplished with a one-page letter.

- During the legislative session 3 million was given to the RAP fund. CRAB lobbied successfully to have the funding move to the CAPP program. They have asked all money be given to the Counties in July of 2006, which would equate to 1.5 million for 05/06 and 1.5 million for 06/07. The timing in the distribution is due to the gas tax initiative on the ballot last year.
- Maintenance Management is an eligible expense under CAPP
- Legislature has rectified the motorcycle sign during session

*Dean Burton*, WSAC President, challenged the engineer group to donate to the WSAC scholarship fund. Envelopes were left for anyone who wished to contribute.

*Tom Robinson*, WSAC Timber Coordinator explained Public Law 106-393 and handout, a document showing the allocations to Counties for 2005. Currently the law is to sunset in 2006. There has been a movement to re-up the law. Originally 25% of proceeds from timber harvest would be deposited into the road fund. Now, because of a reduction in timber harvest, a portion of the funding comes directly from the federal treasury. Out of 500 million dollars nationally, Washington State receives approximately 9%. If this funding is important to your County, you are urged to go to the National Coalition webpage and get vocal with the help of your Commission. Currently there are proposals being floated to continue funding.

*Julie Sexton*, Policy Director, WSAC gave a recap of the recent legislative session. She stated that revenue might be on the table during the next session because of the loss of some. Also, the next session would be a good time to take a look at any policy issues that the engineer's group is concerned with. A timeframe that will work is to have a draft in September and a final draft to Legislators by November.

Ross Dunfee, Benton County, asked about diversions at the County levels to the Sheriff's office and if we could consider pushing for more accountability from the Sheriff's side. Julie stated a good approach would be to take this issue to the WSAC sub-committee and try to handle it internally rather than at the State legislator level.

Reid Wheeler, suggested that the next session would be a good time to look at eliminating the annual fee from the DNR on Surface Mining Permits.

*Jim Whitbread*, Stevens County, Asked if the group was aware of requests to CRAB for monies from the gas tax to fund capital improvement to County ferry systems? Currently, there are 4 County proposals that have been submitted to CRAB for funding. On July 13 and 14, at the CRAB meeting, the Board will decide if they want to fund the projects. The original program started in 1991 and comes back to the 1<sup>st</sup> boat replacement in Pierce County. Money would come off the top of the gas tax distribution. Jolene requested a copy of the worst-case scenario from CRAB so that it can be distributed to all the East Side Counties.

*Reid Wheeler*, Consultant, WSAC, gave a recap on the 2006 legislative session on both bills that were passed and those that are likely to return in the future sessions. Some bills that passed that were discussed include:

- 2612 – Failure to secure a load
- 2987 – Increase penalties for gross weight over weights
- 6175 – Fee structure surface mining permits

- 6241 – Supplement budget Transportation
- 6762 – Motorcycle sign issues
- 6787 – Local government passenger ferry only service.  
Amended to allow ferry districts for a funding source. \$0.75 per 1000 over  
and above the 5.90 limit
- 6839 – Transfer of money to CAPP

*Barry Diseth*, Commercial Vehicle Services, WSDOT, gave a presentation on a proposed Multi-jurisdictional Over Legal Vehicle Permit System. The system would consist of a web-based system that would have a dataset from the Counties (Mobility). The Counties would have the options to control items such as, freeze/thaw restriction, bridge overloads, etc. A question was asked about how the system would work with other States (Idaho). Currently there is a system in place across the county but does not include local roadways.

### **Roundtable**

*Jolene Gosselin*, Douglas County, asked if anyone has received a letter from the Broadband communication group. The movement appears to be that the groups do not want to pay franchise fees.

Jolene mentioned a program called "Law School for Civil Engineers" and wondered if anyone had attended. Walt Olsen, CRAB said he attended and it was a good program. The group recommended that the program be passed on to Joe Rutan for possible professional development course.

*Larry Pearson*, Maintenance Manager, CRAB, had a brief discussion on Maintenance Management progress in the Counties and handed out the new Annual Certification form that will be used by CRAB.

*Ross Dunfee*, Benton County, mentioned that it would be a good idea to have an engineer confer with the Surveyors Association and see what problems/differences there are between the two groups on legislation. Ron Curen, Pend Oreille, volunteered.

*Reid Wheeler*, Consultant, WSACE, informed the group that the Bi-annual salary survey will be coming out this winter.

*Walt Olsen*, Deputy Director, CRAB gave a presentation on County Ferry Capital Improvement Program (file attached).

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.